

ABSTRACT

5 The present invention provides systems and methods for
secure transaction management and electronic rights protection.
Electronic appliances such as computers equipped in accordance
with the present invention help to ensure that information is
accessed and used only in authorized ways, and maintain the
integrity, availability, and/or confidentiality of the information.
Such electronic appliances provide a distributed virtual
10 distribution environment (VDE) that may enforce a secure chain of
handling and control, for example, to control and/or meter or
otherwise monitor use of electronically stored or disseminated
information. Such a virtual distribution environment may be used
to protect rights of various participants in electronic commerce and
15 other electronic or electronic-facilitated transactions. Distributed
and other operating systems, environments and architectures, such
as, for example, those using tamper-resistant hardware-based
processors, may establish security at each node. These techniques
may be used to support an all-electronic information distribution,
20 for example, utilizing the "electronic highway."